

BUDDHA DHYĀNA DANA REVIEW

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Please refer Graphical Image No: V2N2.1.1

Photo: R to L New Director Gilda Grey, J.D.Hughes
& Lisa Armitage on the occasion of Gilda's 40th. Birthday
at the Centre.

EDITORIAL

OM NAMO BHAGAVATYAI ARYAPRAJNAPARAMITAYAI!

When the Australian popular press and television became involved in extensive recent publicity for the recent Australian Visit of H.H. the Dalai Lama, a major aspect of the significance of H.H. for Buddhists was not reported.

This is his role as an active Bodhisattva of medium power.

As expounded in the Large Sutra on Perfect Wisdom with the divisions of the Abhisamayankara (Trans. E.Conze 1984), the six perfections is the genetrix of the Bodhisattvas.

The Theravada Texts urge practice of the ten perfections.

One of this World's most moving experiences must be the strange incident that occurred when the Venerable Phra Acharn Mun Bhuridatta contacted his spouse in former times.

The Venerable Acharn and his wife had together made a vow to become Buddhas in the future. In that life, it may be said they practised as Bodhisattvas.

The Venerable Acharn had told her he had given up his resolution in order to attain to the cessation of suffering within this lifetime. The Venerable Acharn had told her that he didn't want her to visit him because she might have been the cause of a delay in his meditation effort, not because there would have been anything indecent such as there would have been in the world of human beings.

He advised her of the fundamental purpose of doing good. "Even in eating together," the Venerable Acharn said, "there is sure to be one who stops first and then another who finishes later".

It would be interesting to know what the Western press will report if a doga (words of

witness) was given with the outcome of H.H.'s completion of his Bodhisattva practice when he attains to the cessation stage in this lifetime, as has been said in predictions.

What the publicity machinery of the Western World does in such event could be enhanced within a context of what good information they can be supplied prior to such an event.

This Western publicity bias has become repeated to such an extent, and is so pervasive that many persons, including some of those who label themselves as Buddhists, believe this to be true.

In mentioning this tendency, the author has no intention to reflect on the intellect or good will of journalists and editors, who have neither the time nor experience to sense that their assumptions on the distribution of Bodhisattvas within the Sangha are flawed in this regard.

An additional error is they seem to have a penchant to imply that somehow the only manifestation of Bodhisattvas is within that dispensation of the Sangha they label Mahayana.

As a prompt to stimulate intra-Buddhist harmony and co-operation, skilful means are needed to close this gap in comprehension and/or of will of journalists to acknowledge the facts of the existence of Bodhisattvas wearing the saffron robe of the Theravada with a view of realigning Western World publicity direction.

The theme of the 1992 W.F.B. Conference in Taiwan is to be "Development Through Harmony and Co-operation".

It would be a worthwhile exercise were the mass of the collective wisdom collected by W.F.B. delegates that they bring to the Conference be directed to devise and agree upon a substantive tactic to correct this Western developed biased approach of ascribing the distribution of Bodhisattvas in this Dharma ending Age.

May all beings be well and happy.

John D. Hughes
Editor.

Please refer Graphical Image No: V2N2.1.1

Double Dorje ink Stamp image.

Five Day Meditation Course - 17 to 21 April 1992

The students at this Course were guided by B.D.C.(U) Ltd Resident Meditation Teacher, John D. Hughes.

The success of the Course was dependent on the fact that prior to the Course, most Students at the Centre had been active in four varied merit making activities.

The Four Varied Merit Making activities

1. THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW POND IN AN EASTERLY DIRECTION.

The name of this pond is ARAKKA ARANNAKA, which is the name of a deva who protects persons in places of solitude, such as forests.

Australia has serviceable forest land suitable for the practice of meditation. B.D.C.(U) Ltd intend to set up a Forest Refuge Centre in the neat future and require ARAKKA ARANNAKA to help those persons who desire to get rid of the “householder’s fetter”(Pali - gihisamyojana) and use it for meditation practice.

On 3 April 1992, at the mid construction point, offerings of boats carrying lighted candles and flowers were made prior to B.D.C.(U) Ltd Member Gilda Grey’s fortieth birthday on 4 April 1992. On Gilda’s birthday, twelve Monks and two Nuns attended the Centre and were offered Dana. The Venerables chanted to welcome the Deva.

On 7 April 1992, about 120 Vietnamese Sangha and lay Buddhists visited the Centre, and circumambulated the site of the ARAKKA ARANNAKA pond whilst chanting Homage to Quan Um Bodhisattva. The merit was dedicated to many beings, including deva protectors.

On the second day of the Meditation Course many Members worked together under supervision, to prepare the ARAKKA ARANNAKA pond, which is located near the East Gate of the Centre.

Built in Ch’an Mind to represent the shape of Australia, the pond was dedicated to the Deva of Australia. By dedicated this pond to the Deva of Australia we hope to strengthen the links of the Deva of Australia and ARAKKA ARANNAKA.

Prior to work commencing on the pond, Meditation Master John D. Hughes had emphasised the importance of paying particular attention to the precept of no killing.

In the afternoon, each Member was allocated a specific task for the project which included preparing the mortar, removing vegetation and rocks from the site and clearing of any other debris from the pond.

Throughout the day, Members were involved in different tasks, including collecting fresh soil from beneath the Centre's humus heap, laying wire in the pond to reinforce the cement, and pouring and mixing cement.

After the cement had been laid in place, Meditation Master John Hughes offered precious stones, coral and rocks to a few BDC(U)Ltd Members who were instructed to meditate on these offerings and to mindfully place them in the fresh concrete.

The Members worked until dusk at which time the final layer of concrete was put in place.

Earlier, a foundation stone has been set at the site of the pond at a point where the West Gate can be viewed. The stone is engraved with the name: ARAKKAARANNAKA.

2. WEDDING AT BUDDHIST DISCUSSION CENTRE(UPWEY)LTD

On 21 March 1992, the wedding of Dorothy Sadler and Michael Welton, both Directors of

B.D.C.(U)Ltd, took place in the garden of the Centre.

Members prepared the Centre for the ninety people who attended the ceremony which was performed by a civil celebrant.

The Most Ven. Acharn Boonpeng Mahathera temple bell was sounded by the celebrant to signify the completion of the marriage ceremony.

As practising Buddhists, Dorothy and Michael maintain five precepts. Therefore, their marriage becomes a part of their practice and has a basis which will ensure them many blessings, since Sila is a method of making merit. In his speech, Michael, talked about happiness and making the causes for happiness. He noted that sharing a life with someone in mutual love, tolerance and friendship is a blessing and a cause of happiness to ourselves and to our families and friends and other people.

Michael then read the Mangala Sutta. (1)

Copies of the Mangala Sutta were distributed to the guests by Dorothy and Michael.

Many of the guests practised Dana by bringing gifts and food for the wedding celebration. A week before, on 19 March, 1992, a blessing was held at the Centre for Dorothy and Michael, performed by Venerable Dr Viriyananda, Ven. Soma, Ven. Dhammagavesi and Phra Maha Anek. Ven. Viriyananda presented Dorothy and Michael with a beautiful Burmese Buddha Image as a wedding gift. Many members and friends attended and prepared Dana for the Monks.

3. VIETNAMESE BUDDHIST PILGRIMAGE 7 MARCH 1992

On 7 March 1992, approximately 120 Sangha and Members of The United Vietnamese Congregation of Victoria of 177 Morris Street, Sunshine, made their annual pilgrimage to the Buddhist Centres in Melbourne. After the visitors had walked in the garden of the Centre, Roger Armitage welcomed them.

He referred to the fact that over the years Mr. John Hughes and Members of this Centre have been privileged to attend many of the Vietnamese Buddhist Association celebrations such as Vesak, Vu-lan and, more recently, the foundation stone laying ceremony of the new Vietnamese Buddhist Community Centre in Braybrooke, Victoria.

The offering of the new Ch'an pond to the Deva was made with a request that this Deva act as a protector of all Buddhists in Australia and elsewhere.

The Ceremony was in two parts: firstly, a short walking Meditation around the new pond site; secondly, chanting Homage to Quan Um Bodhisattva whilst performing the Walking Meditation around the pond site.

4. MELBOURNE VISIT OF HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA

Several Members of B.D.C.(U) Ltd were involved in the preparations for the visit of His Holiness the Dalai Lama for many months before his visit to Melbourne. Their functions included fund-raising (so that the Teachings by His Holiness could be given free), and organisation of security, transport, and acting as attendants at the various events.

Using the merit made by these various activities

A five day Meditation Course is both a merit consuming and merit making activity. Because there is a great variety of beneficial Buddhist practices, there are many ways of transformation or multiplication of merits. Without merit to use, there would be no cause to apply Buddha's Teachings to remove hate, greed and ignorance and grow in direct knowledge and direct experience of Buddha Dhamma.

Additional site works.

The precept of no killing is stressed whenever soil is displaced for any site works.

Permission had been obtained to install a water tank at the Centre. This means a future savings of some of the mains water. A water overflow catchment was required for the water tank. A ten meter underground soakaway was laid approximately one metre below the lawn surface to help evenly distribute the water overflow from the water tank. This will keep large quantities of water away from the stumps supporting the Centre building and hence prevent rotting of these stumps and possible associated dangers.

This exercise helped Students to lengthen the life of their Centre for the Buddha Dhamma and at the same time practise no killing by being careful not to kill or even maim small beings living in the soil.

Advantages of Maintaining and Restoration of Buddhist structures and artifacts

If a person were to be materialistic and to believe in the long half-life of atoms or molecules, it is a sobering thought to say to such persons that there is not one atom of matter on this world's land, sea or air mass that has not been offered or recycled or used over time for the purposes of the various Buddhas' sasana.

In pondering from this viewpoint, it becomes clear that clinging to materiality (pali; rupa) is really not possible.

It is valuable to examine the fact that collections and orchestrated assemblies of material structures are subject to decay, fracture or dissolution (Pali: rupam anicca) either by natural processes or sentient beings' action or inaction.

Repair to Centre's Artifacts in the Westerly Direction.

On the third day of the Course, repairs were made to the Kuan Yin Pond, and the Taiwanese wooden Image of a standing Kuan Yin was treated with oil for preservation from the weather. The pond is situated in a westerly direction through the West Gate of the Centre. This pond was built by twenty Members of the BDC(U)Ltd in 1988 and the merit of this project has helped to create harmony and peace in the entire area of Sherbrooke.

Since an embodiment of a form of Kuan Yin, H.H. The Dalai Lama, had agreed to visit Melbourne later in the year, and several of our Members were helping with the organisation and fundraising of this event, it was appropriate to restore the pond at this time.

A further advantage was that the merit made by the restoration action was able to be utilised

to reinforce the intensity of the Precept of no slander.

Expedient Means

Because some persons sought Buddhist practice by denial of the existence of devaloka ("heavens") earlier this life, it is useful, before introducing Pure Land Practice to such persons, to use expedient means to establish heavenly lands with their deva inhabitants as existent.

Any Students holding doubt of devaloka were advised to consider for themselves that Pure Land Practice is simply an expedient means to enlightenment.

For others, the Pure Land practice one chooses should be, if possible, the most appropriate antidote for a person's own karmically formed needs.

For example, those who had practised in a Theravadan tradition in previous lives are most likely to be well suited to this Practice in the present life.

There is some truth in the statement that, in ancient times, especially in China, different practices were taken on by the different social classes present in those days.

Overall, it might be said that most of the Sangha and the Monarchy class structure and its assembly favoured one type of Buddhism; the Warriors practised a form of Ch'an and the poorer Lay persons inclined to Pure Land Practice.

Avoiding sectarianism

Now supposing this was true, it may have led others to believe that because Pure Land Practice was practised by the "common folk" it was something that was worthy of little respect from "higher social class" type of persons. Hence, from a social pride sectarianism which saw their form of Buddhism as expression in texts that were rationally organised, highly efficient and had a fully predicable mode of social praxis, came slander of the working class form of Buddhism which may have seemed irrational and muddled from that position. Such sectarianism gives little or no hope of those practising slander to even enter Pure Land. Other problems may also arise. For example, if one had slandered Pure Land Practice in one life and then come near to it in the present life, there is little chance of such a person to feel comfort, even though they are able to practise Pure Land Practice. Hence, by ceasing to practise, they may have cut themselves from Buddha Dharma.

Again, another consequence may have been rebirth into a hell realm. This aspect was further investigated on the third day of the Course.

Precepts

The Teacher urged Students to observe five precepts (i.e.: no killing, no stealing, no sexual misconduct, no lying, no intoxicants) plus a sixth : no slandering.

No Slander

To undertake this training precept did not simply mean not to outright slander another practice or to say one practice is better, worse or even equal to another, but not to slander any practice, religion, belief, faith, or being.

The main difficulty is that slander in Australia is extremely common and, in many cases, is a substitute for any meaningful conversation.

Cause and Effect of Slander

The outcome of kamma (pali: vipaka) of slander will make the Pure Land Practice harder because if the slander was directed to the Buddha, the merit would be destroyed. In one life, if slander was to be directed at a person with a killing wish, in the next life it is conceivable that person slandered may be born to be your husband or wife or born as your mother or father or sister or brother. In rebirth, you could experience the hapless result of your former slander as an always felt threat or have the illusion about your family (without base) that they were seeking to kill you.

The danger of not removing subtle defilements

On the third day of the Meditation Course, it was noted by the Students that, although their efforts to practise reduced their gross defilements, they became aware that there were still various subtle delusive thoughts within their minds.

Hence, seasoned cultivators become wary of notions that there is any short-cut possible, that does not involve ongoing accumulation of merit.

The following story was used (2) to illustrate the danger of subtle defilement:

"Once there were two well-known Zen Masters who had been enlightened to the Way. One day, as they sat in meditation together, the young master had a thought of lust and desire, which he immediately severed. However, the Elder Master, seated opposite, already knew of the occurrence. After emerging from meditation, the Elder Master composed a poem, intending to tease his friend.

The latter, sad and ashamed, immediately "gathered up his vital energy", and expired on the spot. The Elder Master, filled with remorse, called his disciples together and followed his friend in death, leaving these parting words: 'My friend, while in meditation, had a false thought of lust and desire and will therefore certainly be entangled in love relationships in his next life. He dies while unhappy with me, and therefore, upon rebirth, will cause havoc to the community of monks. I am partly responsible for all of this, so if I do not follow and guide him, I will not escape the consequences...!'"

The Elder Master was able to see the place of rebirth for the younger Monk and took rebirth in order to stay near him. When the former younger Monk had come to a position of authority as a famous Chinese Poet, he began to challenge the Zen Masters in debate and argument. Only after he was vanquished in debate by his former friend, the Elder Monk, did the young Monk return to his Buddhist Practice.

The difficulty illustrated by this story is that once we are well advanced on the Path and have accumulated much merit, mental ability and mental cultivation, should we fail to destroy

subtle delusions, we have the potential to be reborn and be greatly affected by those delusions.

The combination of a birth conditioned by great merit, skill and mental cultivation, and the death thought of being very unhappy with the Elder Master, meant that the young Monk in his next birth would begin to use his force to attack the Buddha Sangha.

From the position of power and authority his merit allowed him to achieve, great damage could have been generated to Buddhism in China. In this way, Students were warned that certain Teachings will not be given in the future to individual Students, unless they have already firmly and securely established the Precept of no slander.

Volitionally undertaking a precept of no slander

Throughout the course, Five Precepts were taken again and again. The Student must become more secure in the moralities before Practices which will increase their mental power are undertaken. For this reason, the additional precept of no slander was volitionally undertaken.

This Teaching was further elaborated on the fourth day of the Course when it was explained that the strength of the Student's Refuge in Buddha Dharma Sangha is "tested" at various stages of the Path. There are periods of Practice when the defilements of the Student concentrate on the Student's mind and the strength of the Student's Refuge in Buddha needs to be greater than the accumulated defilements in order for the Student to conquer those defilements.

In a similar way to the Buddha defeating mara whilst sitting under the Bodhi Tree, or the many stories of the Arhants defeating mara, the student when knowing the power of the massed defilements, needs to not abandon the Buddha Heart or faith (confidence).

By diligently exercising restraint and not acting on the defilements, the mara selfish nature will be defeated. Such a mind has Refuge in the Buddha superior to refuge in greed or hate.

The maintaining of the precept of no slander is a particularly powerful protection for such experiences. The Dharma Teacher is also able to help the Student to not fall back at this point.

Once this stage has passed the Student is less likely to be corrupted again by those defilements.

During the Course, one of our Malaysian Chinese Students undertook an English Translation of a Chinese text (3) dealing with the outcome of slander.

Outcome of Slander.

The Chapter translated deals with the removal of tongue and skewering of cheeks as caused by slandering in human lifetime.

This section involved Yong Sand, who is a human. He meditated with a Monk to visit one of

the hell realms and talk to three punished slander ghosts there.

One was an old layperson who always displayed jealousy, gossiping and lost morality in speech (when in human birth) and caused the harmony of the family to break down.

Another was a male (when human) who had short temper, scolding others regardless of if they were his own elders or others' ancestors.

The Chief of the Hell commented:

If one being is (afflicted) with a bad heart, no one can see it; but those beings (who are afflicted) with bad speech, everyone can hear it!

For those who are being cut by knife, it is easy to the to recover; but, for those who have been offended by speech it is very hard to cure them!

For those who insult others, or slander others using a dark language, such actions will destroy their morality in speech and result in demerit, causing their chances of getting enlightened to be slimmer and, also, they have to suffer in Hell.

The third was a master slander ghost. When he was in human life, he was a Monk. He slandered other Deva as evil and criticized other religions as well as Teaching Buddha Dharma with his own bias point of view due to his jealousy. This caused his Students to stop to offer (merits) and have no respect to those Deva (who were associated with other religions. This lead to religion conflicts.

The former Monk (now a master slander ghost) wished to warn those who slander Buddha during Dharma Teaching will be punished in the same way - tongue being removed and cheek being skewered.

Pure Land Approach with One Mind

On the fourth day, a translation from a Chinese text of Quan Yin with Thousand Hands and Eyes calligraphy was tried after some chanting and bowing using the mantra.

NA MWO GWAN SHR YIN BODHISATTVA (OF GREAT COMPASSION)

Further calligraphy was translated at that time as:

Let all be respectful and reverent (with dignity)

With One mind (sincere) (Use one bow)

There are three treasures always located in the ten directions (bow once then stand and half bow)

MAIS Input.

One further goal of this Meditation Course was for Students to write abstracts of key Buddhist Texts, journals, newsletters and documents for inclusion in the national computerised database known as MAIS (Multicultural Australia and Immigration Studies).

MAIS contains references for 20,000 documents. Any topics which influence our

multicultural society are covered, including issues of government policy and practice, law, community relations, labour economics, ethnic history, education and social services.

The BDC(U)Ltd Library Sub Committee has recently decided to contribute abstracts from our Buddhist Library from over 400 key information documents to the MAIS national database.

Students spent part of the final day of the Meditation Course preparing abstracts for this project.

Overview of Course.

There are as many overviews as there are Students attending. Some wrote of what they understood from it, some claimed that the imprint would stay with them. None claimed that they captured all the flavours that the Teacher has imparted to the Meditators.

While it may be said, in brief, it related to the Practice of Pure Land, the conditions that exist there, the key to the Course was it gave an opportunity to practise the precept of no slander with understanding.

By setting the precept as a major Goal, the method, the confidence in the method, the importance of the precept of no slandering was being evident by even the second day. Also, the outcome of the causes of slandering and effect.

By the fourth day, the Students were requested to translate some passages of Kesamutta Sutta using our own vocabulary and discovering the Pure Land minds.

From the arising of their insight qualities and the different dimensions they saw as encompassing the translations by various Students: each person's slander ceased. At that point, their wholesome minds show the varied dimensions described in Texts make sense as well as increasing mindfulness.

Some insights into the nature of subtle slander.

Right View on slander is acquired by hearing the Teaching with the Dhamma-ear (Pali: dhammasota) and seeing the goal by having the Dhamma-eye (Pali: dhammacakkhu).

The puthujjana is transformed into an ariya-savaka.

Four examples, by way of example, show the differences in nuances that may be experienced.

1. "My Teacher" is the "biggest and the best" is slandering all "other Teachers"
2. My stream (Path, School, Practice) is "the best" is slandering all streams of Buddha Dharma
3. I am "the best" (at anything) is slandering all other "besters & bestees".
4. So called "literate humour" in the form of subtle sarcasm and pressed criticisms and/or articulate wit is usually "disguised slander"

By examination, it soon becomes evident that almost all words delivered with intention or with a desire to "contact" are found to be gross to mild forms of slander.

Hence, sound advice is to "guard with diligence what goes in and out of one's mouth".

The Pure Land of Amita Buddha

Students were introduced to the concept that Pure Land Practice is one means of attaining enlightenment.

There are dangers which arise when different practices are compared. To call one practice better than another is to degrade or slander that other, and thus to break the precept of no slander, so fundamental to the successful accomplishment of Pure Land Practice.

Past causes determine which practices are suitable for which people.

It is helpful if Students are given an opportunity to explore and understand different practices with clear minds.

Teachers are useful since very few Students can determine which is the most appropriate practice for their particular set of karmas, so that the shortest path to nibbana access is clear.

The article was edited by J.D.H. from the notes compiled by the Students.

May all beings be well and happy.

J.D.H.

References

1. B.D.C.(U) Ltd. Newsletter No. 4, June 1981, pp 20-21.
2. Dharma Master Thich-Thien-Tam Buddhism of Wisdom and Faith for Pure Land Principles and Practice Pub. International Buddhist Monastic Institute Phat Hoc Vien Quoc Te U.S.A.1991 (Original title -Niem Phat Thap Yeu) p. 137
3. The Diary of the Trips to Hell by Yong Sen, Publisher San Yang Printing Enterprise, R.O.C. 1965.

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Ink block stamp of Bodhisattva Ksitigarbha

MEDITATION COURSES 1991 - 1992

Five day course 24 - 28 September 1992.

Five day course 27 - 31 December 1992.

Five day course 9 - 13 April 1993.

Teacher: John D. Hughes

Courses run from 9 a.m. - 10 p.m. each day.

At least five Precepts should be maintained.

No charge.

CH'AN TRAINING WORKSHOPS

18 July 1992
25 July 1992
29 August 1992
12 September 1992
19 September 1992

Sumie Master Andre Sollier will hold a seminar in Ch'an painting on 31 October 1992.

INTRODUCTORY/PREPARATORY CLASSES FOR PRAJNA PARAMITA

Introductory/Preparatory classes for Prajna Paramita commenced on 25 May 1992. These classes will be held on Monday nights from 10.00 - 11.00 p.m.

PRAJNA PARAMITA TEACHINGS

Commencement date to be set. John D. Hughes has declared his intention to Teach the Prajna Paramita in 100,000 lines for a period of three years and three moons. These Teachings will be one session per week.

WEEKLY MEDITATION CLASSES

Monday and Friday nights from 7.30 p.m.
Teacher: John D. Hughes

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Photo: Master Lin with John D. Hughes at the Foundation Stone Laying Ceremony for a new Buddhist Temple in Maribyrnong, Melbourne.

Please refer Graphical Image No: V2N2.?.2

Photo: Gilda Grey celebrates her 40th Birthday in the presence of Venerable Viriyananda and Members of the B.D.C.(U) Ltd.

Please refer Graphical Image No: V2N2.?.3

Photo: Dorothy and Michael Welton with John D. Hughes on the occasion of their marriage in gardens at the B.D.C.(U) Ltd.

Please refer Graphical Image No: V2N2.?.4

Photo: B.D.C.(U) Ltd Members installing a new water tank at the Centre.

Please refer Graphical Image No: V2N2.?.5 & 6

Photo: John Hughes and B.D.C.(U) Ltd Members building the ARAKKA ARANNAKA pond at the Centre

Vesak Ceremonies at B.D.C. (U) Ltd. 15 - 17 May 1992

Members celebrated vesak (versak) at the Centre over three days. On Friday 15 May 1992, a set of Tipitaka in the English language was officially installed on a specially prepared bookcase on the wall near the main altar. During the day, the Meditation Hall and premises were cleaned and the altars decorated with offerings. In the evening, Venerable Dr. Viriyananda Mahathera, Bhante Kassapa, Venerable Soma, Venerable Dhammagavesi, Venerable Dhammadharo and Venerable Thich Thien Tam arranged chanting of blessings.

A contingent of Gembrook Venturers and their Leaders attended the ceremony. To obtain the highest award in scouting, the Queen's Scout Award, it is necessary to study other religions. The Gembrook Venturers elected to study the Buddhist Religion. John D. Hughes is authorised to sign their records for this purpose.

Bhante Kassapa explained there are basically two types of minds in the world; one type is the Bodhisattva mind or Buddhist mind and the other type is the non-Buddhist mind. Bhante Kassapa gave a Dhamma discourse at two levels. The first level dealt with the desired qualities a human being having either of these sorts of minds could develop. These qualities are loving kindness, compassion, appreciation of other people's happiness and equanimity. Because these things can be practised by both sorts of minds, they are suitable for many religions present in the world today, such as, for example, Christianity. This part of the talk was mainly for the benefit of the Christian Venturers.

The second level of Bhante's talk dealt with the three levels of Sasana. The first sort (Pali: pariyatti) is the type handed down from generation to generation and gives explanation of the nature of Buddha and details of meditation practice. The second sort (Pali: prathipatti) is the application of the teaching of Buddha. The third sort (Pali: prathivedha) is to remove the ignorance which conceals our nature so we can see without doubt the causes and effects which bring our life as it is. When we arrive at this point we have some level of realisation. By continuing practise from that point through four stages over time we ultimately can remove the roots of clinging and grasping and come to final completion as the Buddha mind.

The ceremony included the following Pali Chanting which has been perpetuated in the form of a framed decorative scroll and mounted above the Tipitaka. The translation was supplied by Venerable Dr. Viriyananda Mahathera.

AMHAKAN PUNNATTAYA
Accumulation of Merit for us

BAHU JANA HITATTAYA CA
for the benefit of many

IMANI TEPITAKA DHAMMA POTTHAKANI
these Tipitaka Dhamma Books

IMESANAN DAYAKANAN DEMA
are offered to the Devotees of
(The Buddhist Discussion Centre (Upwey) Ltd).

DUTIYAMPI
for the second time

TATIYAMPI
for the third time

Because the Dhamma is not limited to being taught in any particular language, Members of the Centre who are multilingual addressed and thanked the assembly of Monks in seven different languages.

The following day, 16 May 1992, the soil in the Bodhi Tree brick surround, in the Centre's garden, was prepared for the planting of a young Bodhi Tree. This tree had been cultivated from seeds gathered by Members on last year's pilgrimage to Bodhi Gaya. One of the Centre's Members, Paul Armitage, is an Agricultural Scientist who had arranged the propagation of the seeds in a modern high technology environment in Melbourne. A protective plastic canopy was erected to protect the seedling in its early stages of growth from the frosts that are prevalent this winter.

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Photo: Tibetan and Theravadin Buddhist Monks,
John D. Hughes and other guests attend the Melbourne
Tennis Centre for a public Dharma Teaching by H.H.
The Dalai Lama.

Please refer Graphical Image No: V2N2.?.2

Photo: H.H. The Dalai Lama accompanied by Mr.
George Farley plants a Bodhi Tree for Peace during his
visit to Melbourne.

Please refer Graphical Image No: V2N2.?.3

Photo: H.H. The Dalai Lama giving a public teaching at the Melbourne Tennis Centre.

WHY BUDDHISM

The following talk was given by Ven. K. Sri Dhammananda of the Buddhist Missionary Society, Buddhist Temple, Jalan Berhala, Brickfields, Kuala Lumpur 09-06, Malaysia, to a group of devotees and has been transcribed from a video tape. Part of this talk is produced in this Review, and further instalments will appear in future Reviews.

The subject that you have given for me to discuss is 'Why Buddhism'. This is a very interesting subject. In spite of various other religions, why is it necessary for us to maintain, to promote, another religion known as Buddhism. Have we got enough reasons to prove the uniqueness or the importance of this way. If not, can you single out that there are some extraordinary characteristics or features in this religion which we cannot find in other existing religions. Usually people practise their religion as their cultural heritage; their tradition according to their family background. Those who happen to be born into Christian families, they practise Christianity. They try to justify Christianity; they try to point out Christianity is the only important religion in this world. That is their duty because they think that it is our religion. Because of that feeling; our, our religion; they try to show that Christianity is more important than other religions. And those who are born in Buddhist families also try to do the same thing, although they are reluctant to say that Buddhism is the only true religion in this world. Even then, they try to show others that Buddhism is higher, greater, than all the other existing religions; and Muslims and Hindus also do the same thing because they feel that it is their duty; they are bound to do this to promote our religion.

The idea is good but the attitude is not very good; not very healthy. Because of this attitude, we face enormous conflict, pressures, misunderstanding, jealousy, grudges, discriminations. We have to consider this very carefully because the main purpose of religion; any religion; is to introduce peace, happiness, contentment, harmony, unity, understanding, co-operation, righteous way of life, noble life. If these qualities are not there, there is no meaning at all for practising any religion. If these qualities are not there; if they cannot practise, uphold, these good qualities; better to do away with religion.

To understand 'Why Buddhism', we have to go back 2500 years of history of Buddhism. Then you can understand why Buddhism is needed. When the Buddha appeared in India, at that time they had more than enough religions in that country. When you read Brahma Gala Sutta in Digha Nihaya; a very long Sutta; you can see at that time there were sixty-two religions in India. The Buddha, before his renunciation and gaining his enlightenment, studied under various religious teachers, studying art, language, science, technology, philosophy, psychology and meditation. Even then he could not satisfy. He realised he could not gain what he wanted after studying all those existing religions and sciences and philosophies. That is why he had decided to find out whether there is another method where he can find the answers.

There was a very big problem which has been bothering in his mind from his childhood. He discussed this method with various other religious teachers. He could not gain the satisfactory answer. What is that. As a young prince, one day when he was sitting in the garden, he saw a snake suddenly appear and caught a frog or lizard. Now lizard is struggling to escape. The snake is trying to swallow. When this battle was going on, another bird came down from the sky, taking away the snake. The frog is still in the mouth. Then this has become the turning point for him to think very deeply about the living; survival. What a big battle is going on in this world for their survival; for their living; for their pleasure. Why is it difficult to organise or to create for living beings to exist without facing such big battles. Facing fear without suffering. This was the question.

When you study the existence of all those living beings in the water, in the jungle and in the society, each and every living being depends on another living being. Prey on and catch. Then fight, then cry, then suffer, then die. Then what is the purpose of living in this way. Almost every minute we have fears. Fear of death, and there are thousands and one things for us to create fear, then worry. Then where is the pleasure, where is the happiness, where is the satisfaction. What is the purpose in the end; what will we gain. Nothing. All day and night we are worrying and worrying, and thinking and thinking; how many commitments, how many responsibilities, how many disturbances, how many disappointments are there? One scholar has said 'If I have recorded all the pleasant and unpleasant experiences that I had during my lifetime, I can see only according to the hours which I calculate, only one week, but the rest of my life I spend with fears, worries, problems, difficulties, suffering, disappointment, unsatisfactoriness. This is the nature of existence'.

So this young prince was thinking very deeply why living beings appear in this world. Then people say 'Well, somebody create them'. Then the counter question; why would he want to create like this? Allowing these creatures to suffer, and what is the difficulty for him to create; if he has got the power and the authority to create; and what is the difficulty for him to create all these living beings to exist without facing such problems and worries and suffering. He could not get the answer. Then he tries to find out the answer. He got the answer. 'Why Buddhism' starts from there.

Because all the other existing religions at that time could not give the correct answer to this question. What did they do? One group, all day and night going on praying and praying and reciting and offerings and worshipping in the name of God, thinking that God is responsible for everything. But the Buddha; at that time he was not the Buddha; the Buddha could not agree with this. Later he said, simply by praying or worshipping or offering to anybody in this world in the name of any god or bodhisattvas or the Buddha, or any supernatural living beings, it is impossible for you to find out your final liberation and salvation; unless, until you work for them. You can pray; no harm. There is a saying, belief in God is very good, pray and worship and do some offering in the name of that God for your protection. Very good; no harm. Nobody in this world can say it is wrong. Very good. But don't forget to lock the door when you go out at night time. There is no guarantee that God will protect your house until you come back.

That is what the Buddha says. 'Why Buddhism' starts from there. In the West many people introduce Buddhism as 'do it yourself' religion. The new title for Buddhism. Do it yourself. That means Buddhism is not a lazy man's religion. Just go and pray and worship. Ask somebody else to do the job for you. Send you to heaven ... Buddhism is not that type of

religion. But Buddhism is not against worshipping or praying or offering to any God. If you like, you can do so. We never say those who worship to God go to hell. So the Buddha did not accept that belief that we can find out our salvation only by praying and worshipping to any God without working for that.

To be continued in next Review.

D.J.W.

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